



Svend Jensen inspects a section of honeycomb. Mites have taken a toll in past.

Mites killing Utah honeybees

Beekeepers treat their hives, but wild colonies defenseless

By Gregory P. Kratz
Deseret News business writer

28 Apr
1998

If this is the Beehive State, where are all the honeybees?

An invasion of killer mites has

But Ed Bianco, entomologist for the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food, said he does not think mites have killed enough bees to affect pollination and reduce fruit and vegetable production.

"I think the wild colonies are probably dealing with the problem in a natural way and probably are actually dealing with it better than some of our raised bees," Bianco said.

Some beekeepers estimate that up to 90 percent of the state's wild bee colo-

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it reaches 90 percent.

Two kinds of mites arrived in the United States in the mid-1980s on bees imported from Europe.

The varroa mite, now present in 49 states, is an external mite that attaches itself to a larval or adult honeybee. The mite feeds on an adult bee's blood, and it can lead to deformities when bees are attacked during earlier stages of development.

The tracheal mite is internal. It gets inside a bee's tracheal tube and makes breathing difficult.

And to make matters worse, mites often carry viral and bacterial infections that can wipe out hives.

Bill Jones of Jones Bee Co. in Salt Lake City said honeybees in the United States have almost no resistance to the mites.

"If you don't treat, you don't have bees," Jones said. "Nobody treats the feral colonies, so we don't have them. And there's plenty of evidence to suggest that we don't."

Jones said people used to call him when swarms of wild bees were in their neighborhoods. He almost never receives those calls now.

Bryan Cox, a beekeeper in Prov-

idence, Cache County, said the mites are still around, but beekeepers know how to handle them.

"It's still a problem. It hasn't gone away," he said. "But it's more of a problem when you're taking shots in the dark."

The state's bee industry produced 1.6 million pounds of honey valued at \$1.3 million in 1996.

Bianco said beekeepers can use several chemicals and procedures to maintain that production and fight the mites.

"Certainly (mites) have an impact on bee populations and honey production, but we're better able to deal with it than we were 10 years ago," he said. "It's a threat to those who may not address the (problem), who do not take care of it as they should."

Apistan is the most popular product for killing varroa mites. Studies in Florida show that the mites are starting to build up a resistance to Apistan, but Bianco said other products soon should be available to fight the tiny, reddish-brown creatures.

In the meantime, he said, bees face a threat that is much larger than mites.

"There may be some drop (in bee numbers), and in part that may be due to a lot of the urbanization taking place along the Wasatch Front, in Utah and in general," he said.



Svend Jensen displays a strip used to control bee mites. Without treatment, wild colonies are dying — perhaps 90 percent of them.



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'Moonstruck' star to be boxing grand marshal

Tough-guy actor **Danny Aiello** will be the grand marshal of the 1998 Boxing Hall of Fame Parade of Champions.

A lifelong boxing fan, Aiello is a friend of 1998 inductee **Lou Duva**, parade co-chairwoman **Charlene Barres** said Monday.

The June 14 parade in Canastota, N.Y., will be held before the annual induction ceremony and feature more than 30 past and present boxing champions and ring personalities, including **Marvin Hagler**, **Joe Frazier**, **Floyd Patterson** and **Ken Norton**.

Aiello, who has appeared in such films as "Moonstruck," has a leading role in the upcoming miniseries "The Last Don."

BIRTHDAYS

For
Tuesday,
April 28



Author Harper Lee	72
Iraqi president Saddam Hussein	61
Actress-singer Ann-Margret	57
Talk-show host Jay Leno	48

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Singers reign at fund-raiser for rain forests

Pop singers Elton John and Madonna perform Monday during the ninth annual Rainforest Benefit Concert at Carnegie Hall in New York City. Proceeds from the concert will be used to protect rain forests around the world. Other performers at the fund-raiser included Billy Joel, Sydney Poitier and Roberta Flack.

Ex-Teamster aide indicted in

WASHINGTON (AP) — A six-count indictment filed against the Teamsters' former political director left open the possibility that prosecutors could seek charges against other labor and political leaders.

A federal grand jury in New York on Monday indicted William Hamilton on charges stemming from the tainted 1996 union contest between incumbent Ron Carey and James P. Hoffa, son of labor legend Jimmy Hoffa.

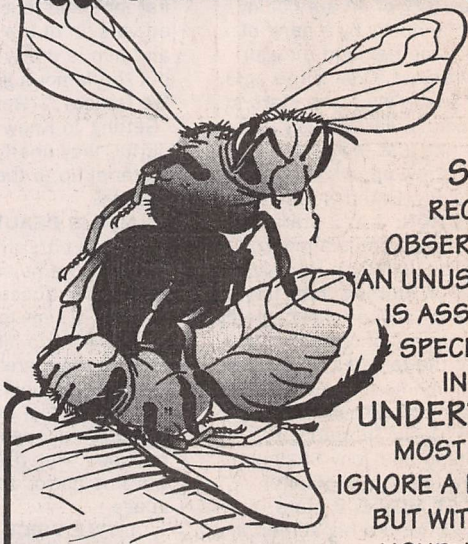
Carey's slim 1996 re-election

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UNDERTAKER BEE



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UNDERTAKING.

MOST BEES
IGNORE A DEAD ONE,
BUT WITHIN AN
HOUR AFTER A
HONEYBEE DIES, A SPECIALIZED BEE ARRIVES
ON THE SCENE, GRASPS THE DEAD ONE AND
DEPOSITS IT ABOUT 400 FEET AWAY. WERE IT
NOT FOR THIS FUNCTION, DISEASE-BEARING
VERMIN AND PREDATORS WOULD QUICKLY BE
ATTRACTED TO THE HIVE!

...wife, Helen (Sissy Spacek) — thought Los Angeles had been nuked soon after they disappeared into their shelter during the Cuban Missile Crisis. PG-13.

A BUG'S LIFE: 3 stars. "A Bug's Life" tells the story of an ant colony that's invaded annually by a gang of grasshoppers, who demand a major share of the harvest. One of the ants, Flik (voice of Dave Foley, who stars in TV's "NewsRadio"), accidentally disposes of the offering just before the grasshoppers show up. It's up to him to save his colony. Rated G

A CIVIL ACTION: 3 1/2 stars. Steven Zaillian's exceptional courtroom drama, based on Jonathan Harr's non-fiction bestseller, starring John Travolta as an ambulance chaser unexpectedly transformed into a justice-seeker when he represents the families of children who might be victims of toxic dumping. Excellent ensemble cast includes Robert Duvall, David Thornton, Kathleen Quinlan and Tony Shalhoub. PG-13 (mature themes, profanity)

DOUG'S 1ST MOVIE. 3 stars. Yes, it's TV blown up for the big screen, but despite the stiff line-drawing animation this good-natured little tale should engage kids on the younger side. The modest hero is 12-year-old Doug (of TV's "Doug"), who becomes torn between wanting to impress Patti Mayonnaise, his long-time crush, and to protect a sweet-hearted, buck-fanged monster that he and buddy Skeeter discover in a lake polluted by a local

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THE KING AND
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LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL
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LITTLE VOICE 2
Horrocks stars as a
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